

Shared Life

The Monthly Newsletter of Old First Presbyterian Church

November 2015

Church Website: oldfirst.org

Church Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/oldfirst

Old First Concerts: www.oldfirstconcerts.org

STEWARDSHIP SEASON: A SEASON FOR GENEROSITY

*“A generous person will be enriched,
and the one who gives water will get water.”*

–Proverbs 11:25 (NRSV)

We are blessed to belong to the community of faith known as Old First Presbyterian Church. Each year we consider our personal call to stewardship for this community. This year our theme is “A Season for Generosity”. The Session is beginning to plan our budget for 2016, including the needs of both our church staff and the building. This past year we recommitted with our time and money to the needs of our neighbors through the food pantry and our Saturday community dinners. The Mission Committee envisions a greater portion of our budget to benevolences, including Syrian relief as well as disaster relief. Stewardship Season begins on Stewardship Sunday, November 1, when you will hear a message from Pastor Maggi Henderson and receive your pledge cards. A letter from the Stewardship Committee should already be in your mailbox with additional messages from the Session.

Please take time during this Stewardship Season to listen, to be challenged, to pray, and to seek what your pledge, your thank-you to God, will be in 2016. Your gift, your increase might seem like it won't make a difference, but when our gifts are combined amazing things can happen. We will collect the pledge cards in worship Sunday, November 22. You can also mail them directly to the church office

Pledge cards will be gathered during worship on November 22. Please reflect on your personal commitment to our community and OFPC as you determine your generous pledge this year.

Giving

O God, you must wonder if we'll ever grow up!
Like bickering children
screaming “Me, first!”
we think our gift is best
our way is the only way.
If we could only remember that
all of God's children
have been given gifts
and that like one gigantic puzzle
if we all use our gifts we'll fit together
and spell GIVING
Then the world could see how the children of God
are called to act.

-Ann Weems

UPCOMING EVENTS AT OFPC

Municipal Election, November 3

On Tuesday, November 3, Old First Presbyterian Church's Fellowship Hall will again host the city Department of Elections and be the polling place for Precinct 7332. Remember to cast your ballot.

The Religious Poetry of Emily Dickenson with Diane Molberg, November 8

None of Emily Dickenson's poetry has been as provocative as her "religious poems." The first of a proposed two-part reading group will discuss selected poems that reflect Emily's deeply personal struggle with the prevailing religious beliefs of her time. The first session will look at poems that reveal her searching for God, and the second session will look at poems that focus on Jesus. Copies of the poems to be discussed will be sent to members already on the book group class list, or by contacting Diane at molberg@earthlink.net, or when you see her at church. Recommended text: "Final Harvest" (paper) or *The Complete Works of Emily Dickinson*.

Remembrance Service for Sara Barrios, November 8

Old First Presbyterian Church will remember former member Sara Barrios and witness to the promise of resurrection on Sunday, November 8, beginning after coffee hour, approximately 12:30 pm.

Old First Staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry, November 14

November 14 Old First provides all the volunteers for the Food Pantry. Come help unload the truck, bring food inside, distribute and clean up later. Contact Dana Nojima or foodpantry@oldfirst.org.

Be an Eco-Steward: Care for God's Creation! November 14

I joined in the clean-up on the beach back in September and would now like to bring a group of the young and young-at-heart to do some hands-on clean-up at Candlestick Point on Saturday, November 14. As we will clean up the landscape, we'll learn about the bay and discover one of the great urban open spaces in our city. We will work from 10:00 am to 12 noon. Talk with Maggi or E-mail her at maggi@oldfirst.org to car pool or meet there!

Ushers' Breakfast, November 15

The ushers will meet for a breakfast meeting on Sunday, November 15 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Pulpit Exchange Report with Pastor Henderson, November 15

Join Pastor Maggi after coffee hour (approximately 12:30) on Sunday, November 15, to hear about her pulpit exchange with St Andrew's East Parish in Glasgow, Scotland. She will try not to "blether" on too much.

SF INTERFAITH COUNCIL'S BENEFIT CONCERT FOR PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT, CATHEDRAL OF ST MARY, NOVEMBER 8

A concert benefiting Project Homeless Connect/San Francisco and entitled *Interfaith Choral Concert: Rejoice!* and sponsored by the San Francisco Interfaith Council will be sung by choirs from five San Francisco congregations – **including our Old First choir** – at the Cathedral of St Mary of the Assumption, 1111 Gough Street, on Sunday, November 8 at 5:00 pm.

WEEKEND CLOSURE OF VAN NESS AVENUE FROM GEARY TO POST, NOVEMBER 13-15

One block of Van Ness Avenue – that between Geary and Post Streets – will be closed for construction one weekend this month: Friday through Sunday, November 13-15. Plan extra time driving or using transit to get to Old First Presbyterian Church's weekend events on these dates, as traffic will be routed around this one block.

SF INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING DAY SERVICE, NOVEMBER 25

The eleventh Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Service from 10:00 am to 11:00 am will be held on November 25 at the Baha'i Community building, 170 Valencia Street. Join Pastor Maggi and other leaders and members of the San Francisco interfaith community in given thanks for the abundance we have received.

COMMUNITY DINNER TURKEY CHEFS NEEDED, NOVEMBER 28

On Saturday, November 28, Old First Presbyterian Church will serve a home cooked Thanksgiving feast for our guests. We need volunteers to cook turkeys! We will supply the frozen turkeys starting Sunday, November 22, and you can bring them back to the church on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, November 23, 24 or 25 – or right to the Saturday Community Dinner on November 28. We need all sorts of help cooking and serving. Contact Pastor Maggi to reserve your turkey: maggi@oldfirst.org. Contact saturdaymeals@oldfirst.org to volunteer your time.

ADVENT BEGINS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Advent begins Sunday, November 29. You can get our devotional for Advent “Hark, the Glad Sound” at worship beginning that day. You’re invited to read each week’s scripture often and deeply as a way to her God’s dream and vision for peace.

Advent 1, November 29	Isaiah 11:1-10, Micah 5:52-5a	The prophets speak of the Messiah.
Advent 2, December 6	Luke 1:5-25	Elizabeth, Zechariah and Gabriel
Advent 3, December 13	Luke 1:26-28, 39-45	Mary and the Angel Gabriel
Advent 4, December 20	Luke 1:57-80	The birth of John the Baptist

BRIGHTEN THE HOLIDAYS FOR A HOMELESS YOUNG PERSON

Bring a Christmas gift to church and help Larkin Street Youth Services brighten the holidays for over 450 young people who stay in Larkin Street’s emergency shelters and transitional living facilities or access Larkin Street’s drop-in centers and programs.

Gifts do not need to be expensive. Gift cards are always popular, especially from retailers such as Ross, Gap, Payless, Macy's, Old Navy, REI, Safeway, Trader Joe's, Target, Sports Basement, Peet's, Starbucks, Walgreens and Best Buy. All gifts must be new and unwrapped. Everyday items are much needed. Besides gift cards, items on young people’s wish lists this year include:

Gifts	Personal Care	Clothing/Household
MP3 players	shampoo, conditioner, lotions	socks, underwear
headphones	deodorant, soap	shoes sneakers, flip flops
bike helmets	sewing kits, first-aid kits	hooded sweatshirts, jackets
backpacks	brushes, combs, beauty products	business and casual clothing
gift cards	makeup kits, shaving kits	ponchos, rain boots, umbrellas
Muni or BART passes	perfume, cologne	alarm clocks, watches, flashlights
purses, wallets	hair dryers, straighteners	plates, bowls, dishes, cups, pots, pans
day planners, journals	toothbrushes, toothpaste	towels, sheets, blankets

We have two options for delivering gifts: One is to bring them to the coffee hour on Sunday, **November 22, November 23 or December 6**. Look for the Larkin Street Christmas gift box in the Fellowship Hall or Bill or Marilyn Campbell. The other is to take or send gifts to Larkin Street’s new Engagement and Community Center at 134 Golden Gate Ave. (between Jones and Leavenworth) weekdays, 9:30-4:30, attention Jessie Backer, by Friday, December 11.

Larkin Street offers innovative and comprehensive services that give homeless and at-risk youth ages 12-24 all the tools they need to reclaim their lives and become self-sufficient adults. Three out of four youth who complete Larkin Street's comprehensive program exit the street.

SF FOOD BANK THANKS OFPC

The San Francisco Food Bank recently sent this message to Old First Presbyterian Church: "Thank you for organizing a food drive resulting in a donation of 250 pounds of food. Every single contribution makes a difference to a low-income household throughout San Francisco and Marin."

THANKS TO ALL WHO PUT THE FUN IN THE *FUN*RAISER FOR THE DK SENIOR CENTER

To all the Old First and Senior Center members and guests who supported our very first Doris Krauss Senior Center *Fun*Raiser, The DKSC Commission sends a huge thank you! A festive crowd enjoyed tasty food, lovely wine, sing-along music provided by piano virtuoso Larry Marietta and a toe-tapping piano interlude by Chuck Olson, all in a magical setting created by Daniel Pearch. Your participation in the event, silent auction and raffle certainly helped our bottom line and we can't thank you enough.

The Doris Krauss Senior Center meets every Monday from 10 am to 2 pm and includes a hot lunch, stimulating programs, nurse consultation and lots of conversation. Those seniors attending pay only \$2 for lunch, a cost that is universally charged by senior centers across the City. Most of those centers rely on grants and City programs for money to offset the cost of the luncheon. Our expansion of the DKSC and its activities is only a little over a year old. We as yet do not have access to city funds nor grants and we have determined that our costs for just providing a hot lunch cooked in our kitchen is approximately \$3 to \$3.50 per meal. Thus, you can see how much value we as commissioners place in your continuing support and encouragement through contributions.

If you are 60 or older, please consider joining us on Mondays. If you have a few hours to give on a Monday where you would be more than appreciated, consider becoming a volunteer one or two days a month. And if you believe that the Senior Center is a valuable extension of our community involvement, then consider a contribution once or twice throughout the year.

Once again, thank you for helping make the DKSC's 1st Annual *Fun*Raiser the *Fun* success that it was. If you missed it, don't despair. There will be another!!

2015 THREE-CHURCH RETREAT AT MT HERMON = WOW!

This year, OFC was invited by First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame to join with them and Calvary Presbyterian for their annual retreat at Mt. Hermon (October 16-18) and I've got to say that this was the best retreat I have ever attended!

Where to start? Every aspect was wonderful! Mt. Hermon is set in a beautiful redwood forest near Santa Cruz and is one of the most luxurious retreat centers OFC has visited, with many semi-rustic modern buildings packed comfortably close together, but with the sense of the forest and clean mountain air very much intact. There were a huge number of Burlingame and Calvary attendees, families with children, singles, old and young alike, and most everyone was just so welcoming to OFC's small group of 24! We chatted up so many strangers and found we actually knew some folks from both churches, and they often knew folks who knew us!

Oh! And the speaker! Rodger Nishioka was amazing! He packed in so much interesting information, along with heartfelt stories and light jokes. He was a great speaker! (Mind you, a few of us thought his presentation a bit theatrical at first, but I guess one has to be that way to get through to so many diverse audiences.) Beyond the regular meetings, he also made a special presentation

Saturday afternoon on the research he had done on why young adults are leaving churches in such great numbers and not coming back (with some hopeful stories of what made SOME come back).

Knowing how important food is to me, I cannot *not* mention that the cafeteria food was very good and had quite a bit of variety and vegetarian food options. *And*, the private stash of OFPC home-baked goodies and other treats we had in our break room were particularly tempting! This year I was able to enjoy the insanely fun antics of the Saturday evening charades players from the relative quiet of a particularly fascinating, intricate jigsaw puzzle (with three other puzzlers) that Jeanne Kirkwood brought. In a short meeting at the end of the retreat we universally agreed that this was one of the best retreats ever and we want to do it again next year on the same three-church basis! –Sarah Taber

Reflections on Two Months' Pulpit Exchange by the Reverend Barbara Quigley, Minister, St Andrew's East Parish, Glasgow, Scotland

Narrative

I came to San Francisco in September 2013 as part of my 60th birthday celebrations. Whilst here I attended Old First Presbyterian Church, liked what I saw and heard and met briefly with Rev Maggi Henderson at which meeting the idea of a pulpit exchange was floated. Almost two years later it actually happened.

Observations

Worship is not restricted the 'holy hour' as in Scotland and can run to 90 mins especially when communion is celebrated every other week. Each Sunday a member of the congregation acts as liturgist leading the worship, using words and prayers provided by the Pastor. There is also another member of the congregation who leads the prayers of the people for which they have the responsibility of writing. This is all done independently of each other and sometimes there has been a feeling of disconnect between the three.

The choir and music are on the up. The new Director of Music is a real find and well loved and respected by the choir and congregation. There is a danger that there could one day be more in the choir than in the congregation! The standard of music is extremely high, each section has a paid section leader and though they are not members of the congregation nor necessarily of any religious belief, they are, to a greater or lesser extent, fellow travellers. The unpaid members of the choir are drawn from the congregation. People greatly appreciate the musicality of the services and sometimes there is a sense that this is worship/concert at the same time.

There are a number of autonomous groups flourishing within the body of the congregation. These groups are self-sustaining and seem to get on with deciding what to do, study, or discuss without reference to anyone or anybody. They are open and welcoming and successful at sharing fellowship beyond the Sunday service. At times they are so successful that there is a danger they might become too big and defeat the aims of a 'small' group.

The Doris Krauss Centre provides a meal and friendship for a number of elderly and disabled people from near and even further out. This group has grown gradually under the care of its director. The quality of the food is of a high standard. There are a number of regular volunteers from the staff and congregation who faithfully help serve meals, chat to people and try to make life easier. The growing number of elderly in the city means that this work could expand and still only scratch the surface. The key feature of this group is not the meal, though that is important, but the way in which it preserves the independence of its members and enables them to take an interest in the world around them. It helps them socialise and stay in touch. It maintains their dignity and sense of self-worth. Could it use occasional translators for those who don't have English?

The location of Old First means that a number of groups use the premises for a variety of activities: food bank; dinner for HIV sufferers; *a capella* singing group.

Old First is a vibrant worshipping fellowship of Christians living out their faith in service of and witness to the Gospel. It is also declining in membership as people become infirm, move away, die. It allegedly has a financial cushion and that combined with an extremely generous level of giving hides an increasingly pressing problem as to its long term viability. [Sounds very much like St Andrew's East – minus the financial cushion; even the whole Church of Scotland]

Questions

- Does the congregation have a mission statement? What is it? Who knows about it?
- How is long term planning done?
- What do you expect to come out of the congregational retreat? How will that be fed back to the whole congregation?
- How do you hold people to account to get jobs done? There are many generals but fewer foot soldiers.
- Why are the pews in the side chapel still there? Sell them to an antique dealer; they're great for some *chi chi* new restaurant. Open up the side chapel, it's like the awkward aunt no one wants at the party.

Old First Concerts

- These are of a high standard, encouraging local professionals. How integrated are they meant to be in the life of the congregation?

Communion

- A simple observation: The alcoholic wine is served up on the chancel. This can be difficult for some people to access, how about moving it onto the level?
- Can the bulletin be more user-friendly and less congested? Gordon found it very difficult to read because of his colour blindness – no I don't understand that bit either but that's what he said.

Quo Vadis? [*Where are you going?*]

- Where do you want to be in 5 years? 10 years? Are you planning for growth or decline?
- Stop talking and get doing what you said you would do. The Pastor should only occasionally have to apply her size 7 [39 in European sizes] to someone's bahouchie to get things moving.
- The membership of this congregation is a store of talent, hidden and otherwise. Spread the jobs around, find an apprentice for the job you are doing.
- Look at using the sanctuary to its full potential, groups are crying out for rehearsal space and you could use the money and the publicity.
- Pews are so last millennium! Chairs mean that the possibilities are endless in worship and witness and extended usage.
- You have a commercial grade kitchen; can you develop its use?

Post script

I am grateful to Old First, Maggi and St Andrew's East for this opportunity. I have learned a number of things:

- "I left my appendix in San Francisco". It doesn't fit the music...
- I won't be retiring to some estate on the edge of town where I would have to drive for a pint of milk.

- UCSF is a very good hospital and their pain management is excellent. They are very good at bringing stuff to you but not so good at clearing it away afterwards.
- I would choose not to leave Glasgow: St Andrew's East, there is still work for me to do here.
- I could cope with another move of parish if I really had to.
- The Christian Church is a worldwide family that looks after its members. You certainly looked after me so well. How does this apply to those who are asylum seekers who end up in Scotland and in St Andrew's East Parish?

Thank you.

It's been the experience of a lifetime!

**with love,
Barbara**

MUSIC IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

San Francisco Civic Symphony, Nourse Auditorium, November 1

The San Francisco Civic Symphony will perform works by Mozart, Glinka and Rimsky-Korsakov on Sunday, November 1, at 3:00 pm at the Nourse Auditorium, 247 Franklin Street. This concert is free and open to the public.

San Francisco Civic Strings, Lakeside Presbyterian Church, November 2

The San Francisco Civic Strings will perform works by Bach, Haydn, Biber and Charpentier on Monday, November 2, at 8:00 pm at Lakeside Presbyterian Church, 201 Eucalyptus Street. This concert is free and open to the public.

Heroes' Voices Veterans Concert, Herbst Theater, November 11

The Rotary Club of San Francisco and Heroes' Voices are co-sponsoring the *Concert to Honor Veterans* on Veteran's Day, November 11, at 7:30 pm at the Herbst Theater, 401 Van Ness Avenue. The concert will feature **Pete Escovedo and his Latin Jazz Ensemble, Vocal Rush, and the Heroes' Voices Bluegrass Band**. This first annual concert celebrates the healing power of music and the arts.

Tickets are free for veterans, and \$20, \$30, and \$40 for the general public with special offers for Rotarians! Free tickets for veterans can be found at heroesvoices.org/freeforvets and the general public can purchase tickets at www.cityboxoffice.com.

First Presbyterian Church's *Sing-Along Messiah*, Oakland, December 13

Join Oakland's Annual Sing-Along Messiah at **First Presbyterian Church**, 2619 Broadway in Oakland. Join others on December 13 at 4:00 pm. You can also rehearse beforehand on December 11 at 7:00 pm. There is a suggested donation of \$10-20 but no one will be turned away because of lack of funds. For more info, contact Dr. Cyril Deaconoff at cyril@firstchurchoakland or call First Church 510-444-3555 extension 4.

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY: THE SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER, 2015

Date	Day	1 st Reading	Psalm	2 nd Reading	Gospel Reading
November 1	Ordinary 31	Deuteronomy 6:1-9	119:1-8	Hebrews 9:11-14	Mark 12:28-34
November 8	Ordinary 32	1 Kings 17:8-16	146	Hebrews 9:24-28	Mark 12:38-44
November 15	Ordinary 33	Daniel 12:1-3	16	Hebrews 10:11-14, (15-18), 19-25	Mark 13:1-8
November 22	Christ the King	Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14	93	Revelation 1:4b-8	John 18:33-37
November 29	Advent 1	Jer. 33:14-16	25:1-10	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36

OTHER DATES TO NOTE

Sunday	November 1	Standard Time resumes: <i>Fall back one hour.</i>
Sunday	November 1	All Saints' Day Worship, 11:00 am, Sanctuary
Sunday	November 8	Memorial Service for Sara Barrios, 12:30 pm. Sanctuary
Saturday	November 14	Old First staffs the Interfaith Food Pantry
Sunday	November 15	Ushers' Breakfast, 9:30 am, Fellowship Hall
Sunday	November 15	After coffee hour: Pastor Maggi's report on Scotland Pulpit Exchange
Saturday	November 21	Presbyterian Women, noon, Library
Tuesday	November 24	Session Meeting, 7:00 pm, Munro Room
Thursday	November 26	Thanksgiving Day, Church office closed
Friday	November 27	Church office closed
Sunday	November 28	First Sunday of Advent
Saturday	December 5	Install Advent Decorations, 10:00 am, Sanctuary

OFFICERS OF OLD FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**Session**

Christopher Burt, evangelism; Bill Campbell, mission and giving; Hsiaochien Chuang, worship; Gregory Free, treasurer; Kristi Hoerauf, finance; Harriet MacLean, personnel; Dana Nojima, operations; Jean Olson, clerk of session; Linda Reyder, worship; Steve Taber, planning; Betty Voris, community building; Priscilla Yu, Christian education

Board of Deacons

Nina Berg, Cindy Burt, Samuel Cheng, Diane Molberg, Alfred Martin, Bryan Nichols, Mary Russell, Randy Smith, Sarah Taber, Jian Wang